

Ghastly New Weapons on Horizon

By Jack Anderson

In peaceful Switzerland, which has not had a war in 130 years, armament and medical experts from 49 lands met recently to discuss calmly the most horrible weapons known to man.

Along with napalm, needle bombs, flame throwers, land mines and other weapons now in the world's arsenals, the delegates, conferring privately under Red Cross auspices, dealt with future weapons.

Some of these mysterious rays, sound beams and light devices have already been tested on sheep, pigs, goats, dogs and other animals. However grisly it may be to shoot hideous rays into a tied and helpless pig, the terror at least hasn't yet been unleashed upon mankind.

From the reports of the delegates, however, that day may not be far off. We have obtained the most horrifying of these reports—the Swedish presentation on “new weapons.” Some of the devices are so shocking that even the Swedish military men at the conference urged that they be banned forever.

“In the near future,” states the report, “the first proper laser weapons will certainly appear.” At first, they will be used solely to “destroy target locators and homing devices.”

But inevitably, they will be improved to knock down aircraft and to set fires. Later, if high costs can be overcome, they might be used as anti-tank weapons.

Observes the Swedish report: “It is self-evident that a weapon able to damage the structure of an aircraft will have immense effects when directed at an unprotected soldier. . . Such injuries will in most cases lead to . . . more or less complete loss of vision. The extremely inhu-

mane and cruel nature of injuries from lasers indicates that a total ban of these weapons could be advocated.”

Even more ghastly are the possibilities of maser or microwave beams, which may soon be developed to destroy enemy radars and guided missile circuitry. But if directed against personnel, the microwaves could literally broil a human being from the inside out, or as the Swedes delicately put it, cause “internal burns (resulting in) coagulation of tissues.”

Other Dr. Strangelove weapons include electric sound generators, which could whirr at high frequencies that the human ear couldn't detect, and a 60-foot-high pipe organ, which would boom out maddening sound against advancing troops.

“It would be almost impossible for a soldier to protect himself against the effects of infrasound,” says the report. These effects, according to the study, would produce “disturbance in vision, sense of suffocation, coughing, headache, dizziness . . . nausea, disturbances of breath and digestion, (persistent) fatigue.”

The sound cannons might be

combined with “light flash” weapons, which would send out blinding light flashes that could “cause permanent eye injury” and, worse, induce epileptic attacks. Even those with no present epileptic tendency could be affected.

Far more terrible, according to the Swedes, would be “environmental (and) geophysical warfare.” Military science, through use of nuclear weapons and even high explosives, can now wrack large areas with earthquakes. If strategically set off, the earthquake could also cause flash floods and “accomplish famine to the civilians and armed forces of the enemy by destroying growing crops.”

As we were the first to report, the United States actually used another form of geophysical war in Vietnam. This was “rain bombing,” which turned roads into deep mud and upset the balance of nature.

Such “tampering with climatic conditions may lead,” say the Swedes, to “unforeseeable . . . consequences, which may prevail for long periods after the cessation of armed conflict.” As a result, the Swedes suggest “a total ban of geophysical warfare.”

The twin of “geophysical warfare,” states the study, is “environmental warfare.” This involves destroying forests with firebombs, fields with chemicals, rivers with poisons and villages with bulldozers.

“Environmental warfare is, by its nature, indiscriminate . . . Long-term ecological changes may ensue . . . changes which may be impossible to restore.” This, too, say the Swedes, should be banned.

Action must be taken, conclude the Swedes, “before these systems have been procured by several states and before they become accepted as common features of warfare.”

WASHINGTON WHIRL—Incredible as it sounds in this time of sugar price rises, the House Agriculture Committee plans to hold hearings on sugar without allowing consumer groups to testify . . . Although California doesn't have 39 per cent of the nation's drug addicts, it has cornered 39 per cent of the \$21 million in new federal antidrug funds. This leaves states like New York and Illinois badly short of antidrug facilities.

© 1974, United Feature Syndicate